Celestial Phones

OR

Voices from the Invisible

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or

Voices from the Invisible

by

S. L. Mershon

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S. L. MERSHON.

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ANTICIPATORY.

Fellow Pilgrim:

Christmas—Easter—the Setting Sun and the Starlit Night—speak to us in the mystic melody of silent intonations, causing no sound vibrations, yet transmitting their sweet messages to the innermost soul, just as we are bound to each other by golden cords of Christian Brotherhood, immaterial and invisible, yet stronger than links of steel.

Please open this book and visit with me that most real place of all, commonly called "the unreal." You will see invisible forms, hear noiseless footfalls, feel the touch of spirits, and, I trust, partake of heavenly calm.

Yours in Him,

S. L. Mershon.

Montclair, N. J.

PRELUDE.

A SHORT time since, I took ship at Providence, Rhode Island, at evening tide. The steamer carried over one thousand souls.

As we moved down the river and out into the deep, joy, animation, and music filled that gliding palace, while pyramids of electric lamps poured a flood of golden light upon us in the cabin.

I moved out upon the deck, and all was dark. Great angry billows rolled tempestuously about us, while rushing winds tore their way over the hurricane deck.

It was a wild storm without.

It was all peace and joy within.

Strange phenomenon! Why, amidst such a storm, should there be such a calm?

Ah! something weird was playing with the hearts of men.

It held us mentally, as it were, in a Haven of Calms, landlocked from a raging sea of fear.

There was supreme faith in an *invisible* pilot at the wheel.

Something above reason saw something beyond the range of vision, "as seeing Him who is invisible," and we were at rest.

INTERLUDE.

I FOUND my way into a "Home for the Deaf and Dumb," and there I met a man in the middle of life who once was in perfect physical condition, but now deaf, dumb, and blind.

Eyes sightless.—The beauties of the world are entirely shut out.

Ears soundless.—The melodies, symphonies, and harmonies of love and life are mute or dead at that golden highway to the soul.

Tongue speechless.—A pent-up mind, starved of love's messages and life's beauties, is not even permitted to relieve itself by one outcry of despair.

A soul in solitary confinement, enshrined in the horror of perpetual night and locked in the maddening hall of ceaseless silence!

He seemed like a strange and silent craft taking its mysterious way in solitude over the darkened sea of human life.

I said to a friend, "What a prisoner!"

My friend replied, "Ah! but he is the happiest man here."

"How do you know?" I responded. "Ask him, and he cannot hear. He has no voice to tell you, and those sightless eyes are expressionless."

"Wait a moment," he replied; and taking hold of this strange being's hand he, by an appeal to the sense

of touch, made in that hand signs which I knew were from the language of the deaf and dumb.

My friend told him that I thought he must be unhappy, and requested him to send a message for me that would explain how it was that I was mistaken.

As the sun suddenly bursts through a rift in the clouds overhanging a dark and turbid sea, so the radiance of an ineffable light billowed the place where we stood, as there flashed back a message translated for me from mystic signals.

"I am simply waiting for the time when these eyes shall be opened and I shall see the King in His glory; these ears shall be unstopped and I shall hear the heavenly music; and this tongue shall be loosened and I shall sing of Him who hath redeemed me from my sins."

He was dwelling on the border-line between two worlds, with windows open toward Jerusalem; and he evidently saw something beyond the vale.

POSTLUDE.

I HAD purchased a ticket at Cleveland for Chicago and was comfortably seated in a sleeping car when suddenly, as we left the depot, a strange feeling of alarm came over me. I could not shake it off. As the conductor came through the train I inquired of him whether we stopped again within or near the city, as I desired to leave the train. He answered "No."

I was deeply stirred, for something said clearly, distinctly, and repeatedly to me, "You are in great danger."

Soon, with the train rushing along at the rate of fifty miles an hour, I fully realized that I was helpless—and yet that warning! There was but one refuge:

> "There is a calm, a sure retreat,
> 'Tis found beneath the Mercy Seat."

I bowed my head in prayer and asked God for special protection from disaster. Just at that moment there was a crash.

I was sitting in Section Six, the upper compartment of which was hinged exceptionally low. The springs on that berth had broken. The shaking of the cars loosened the catch, and the whole berth, loaded with bedding and side boards, fell to the ends of the guard chains with terrible force, crushing my stiff hat; but

as my head was bowed in prayer I escaped what otherwise must have been a fatal blow.

The conductor sprang to me and exclaimed, "I thought you were killed." No; a voice had spoken to me.

Whence came it?

WITHIN THE SHEEN.

WILL you link your imagination with mine and fly with me into the distant past?—yet not very far.

I would have you stand with me on the hilltop where the City of Dothan is built on one of nature's pinnacles, and from that high point I would have you look over a fertile valley robed in the luxurious verdure of unsmitten Palestine. As the blackness of night has swept in over mountain and vale, and the city has fallen into slumber, I would have you watch while the chariots and horsemen of cruel Syria of the north come silently as possible, drawing their iron net of war about the unconscious little city in which abode Elisha the man of God.

Invading warriors polished their spears that they might the more surely reach in vindictive hate the beating hearts of fellow-men; while the sword was whetted that it might cut the more readily through nerves and sinews, to turn loving wives into widowhood, and children into orphans, or worse—yea, far worse were the awful thoughts that blazed in the hearts of the war-calloused veterans waiting for the dawning day ere they should sack the little city.

With the first

FLASHING RAYS OF LIGHT

gleaming over the distant hilltops the wild cry of alarm bestirs the city, while its sons flock to its walls in dis-

may. Among them is a young man, the servant of the prophet Elisha, who, having caught the infection of the panic, rushes back to his master with the despairing cry, "Alas, my master! How shall we do?"

We would listen, as calmly amidst the fearful tumult the old man replies, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." Then, falling on his knees, the old man sweetly prayed, saying, "Lord, I pray thee open his eyes that he *may see.*" And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and *he saw*—"And behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire around about Elisha." Somehow the Syrian host vanished from the young man's mind; the terror-stricken crowd, surging through the narrow streets of the city, was forgotten; and the young man, with a soul glance into the invisible world, saw eternal verities and witnessed omnipotent power surging about God's servant in defensive phalanxes.

Prayer-called—Heaven-sent—Love-commanded, the celestial army lay in the calm curtainings of the spiritual world, separated by the simple veiling of human limitations from the wild concourse of the terror-stricken crowd.

I would also have you read with me from that poetical gem in Hebrew prophecy, the book of Joel, while we consider the promise contained therein, that the Holy Spirit shall appear in all His heavenly light in this world of ours, when the daughters shall prophesy, and the old men shall dream dreams, and the young men shall see visions.

Does it seem incredible to thee that God should re-

veal Himself to His children by other means than that of the physical sense of sound or sight? When in that

SUBLIME TRANSFIGURATION HOUR

a voice from the invisible world cleft the clouds, saying, "This is my beloved Son; hear Him," it was not to reveal the heart of God the Father to Christ, but that the Saviour might be magnified before men as the incarnation of divine life. Christ did not need that attesting voice, for He already knew His oneness with the Father; but gross, sensuous, materialistic men needed once for all the revelation of the invisible to human senses—hence, that voice of identification from the clouds.

The deepest revelations of love and tenderness made to our dear ones are manifest the most when unseen by human eye and unheard by human ear.

Wilt thou deny to the deaf and blind child the sweet ministries of mother love because he cannot hear or see? Or will you permit them in heart language, known only to each other, to develop stronger, deeper, and holier ties than we know of—made more intense because of these very impediments? Knowledge shuts out the necessity for sight and sound.

"Sweet voices come to every ear,
Bright visions to all eyes appear.
The touch divine each soul may feel,
And God in us Himself reveal.
We see Him in each beam of light,
His are the voices of the night,
The myriad stars that shine on high
Record His name across the sky.

" But brighter far the gems that shine
Upon the pages all divine;
The gems of truth that gleam afar
More brilliant than the brightest star.
To His inviting words give heed,
And listen when He deigns to plead;
Hear what those heavenly voices say,
And every gracious call obey."

Under the spell of divine influences a man may close his eyes, and there will float before his spiritual vision scenes of such transcendent splendor that the tongue will fail and language must break down in all attempts to reveal the scene; while in the corridors of the soul angelic voices will ring and the language of heaven will float by melodies rippling in from celestial seas of song.

Has God entered into thy life? Then let us for a moment stop straining our eyes for Him along the highway of the clouds; and our gazing down the paths through meadows and forests. Entering into the heart, we will close the door, pull down the curtains, stir the embers of love on the hearthstone of the affections, for He is within, a resident of the soul.

Hast thou prepared well the furnishings? When love and purity preside in thy heart, then thou wilt hang on the walls of memory, that most sublime of all picture galleries, only scenes of holy joy, while the music of thy thoughts, as they sound the measure of thy spirit, will but bring thee into closer communion with Him who enters into the guest chamber of thy heart. Guard well thy guest, keeping out all that would tend to mar His joy or make unhappy His stay.

The prophet Joel teaches us that the day shall come

when the servants of the Lord may have in this world heaven's atmosphere without them and heaven's climate within them, and, being engulfed thereby, they shall float therein as a casket filled to the brim floats in the great tide of the sea. As that

GLORIOUS PROMISE BURSTS FORTH

from the stereopticon of prophecy I would have you catch its picture on the screen of history, so I would add to our vista that marvelous revelation, when in the fullness of time *there came* that baptism of the Holy Ghost upon the waiting Church. Then Pentecost stood out before the world: the crystalline throne to which the invisible but unmistakably present Holy Spirit came, as He assumed the sway and directed the influences that were to guide the Church of God into all truth, the child of God into all light, and the world to the foot of the Cross.

I would ask you now to forget the limbs that bind us to the ground; the stomach that seeks the orchard, the harvest field, and the vineyard; the lungs that make their appeal to the air; and, higher up, the eye that claims the æsthetical and clings to the beautiful in nature; but flee with me up into that observatory where all revelation must come by soul vision and spiritual emotion—where, alone, thou art divorced from the earth, earthy, and can take thine outlook upon the great sea of the Infinite.

Soon all that is visible and tangible in thee will sink back into the earth, pass away into the air, and make its journey to the sea; excepting only that part of thee which is the flashing spark from the infinite flame of

divine thought; *that* must pass again somewhere into the invisible realm.

Ponder, then, with me as to what are these invisible forces that are constantly surging against us. How can we let into our souls the blessed emotions that are sweeping about us, and how can we link thereto the holy emotions that are playing within us?

Two worlds have floated in together, and lie broadside to broadside. How are the bridges of thought to be thrown across? Are they ever thrown across, carrying messengers from each to the other?

The stars, hundreds of millions of miles away, speak to us without a voice. Men who disappeared a thousand years ago still help to shape the thought of the world. They shot into the world, ran along on its surface for threescore years and ten, and then glanced off into the Invisible; but, while gone, are in fact to-day molding the minds of men. The Almighty God, infinite, eternal, the Creator of all things, is by some supposed to be imprisoned in a celestial city, walled in by His own hands. Having completed the superb workmanship of a world that He has been building up through all the ages, has He at last left man—His highest creation—alone and helpless on top of this marvelous structure, beyond the reach of his Master's voice and with no visible escape? When man at last drops off—— Where? where? or nowhere?

Can anyone sincerely ask the question, "Is there a God in the world?" This is a question easily propounded and quickly answered. Come with me to Newport, and let us wander into that old and tenantless tower. If I should exclaim, "This structure is

a freak of nature, and was never built by human hands!" you would challenge the rash statement and then demonstrate that from the general plan of the edifice and its adaptation to man's requirements it must have been designed by an intelligent mind and constructed by human hands for human occupation. I transcribe to my tourist notebook your argument, and simply change the word "tower" to "world," and the words "architect and builder" to "God," and rest my case on your own logic as to whether there is a God in this world.

In that similitude we but widen out the thought under the same infallible rules of proof.

A line that runs straight for the distance of a mile, when carried forward will be straight to the realms beyond the farthest star.

Pantheism exalts the design. Christianity worships the designer back and above the design.

Pantheism glorifies the house. Christianity crowns the architect and builder of the house.

The house in which you live is but an imperfect representation of a luminous picture in the mind of your architect. It is but a soul vision caught in wood and mortar. No chemist by analyzing it, and no scientist by rending it apart, can discover the thought which permeated it or the mind that inspired it.

The architect is in the building, and yet he is not of the building.

The world is the matchless expression of matchless thought—the mighty design of the Almighty Designer.

The logic of the house is but the logic of nature.

"The heavens declare the glory of God and the

firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth forth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."

Let us take the wings of the morning, and fly up, up, and see if we cannot distill from the clouds sweet whispers of love; from the sun's rays melodies rich with divine heart-throbs as they vibrate, having been touched for us by the unseen fingers of God. I believe that back of the rustling of the leaves of the trees of the forest, back of the stars singing together, back of all nature's melodies, we find the Master Mind of all the universe sitting in the great dome of heaven, from whose chimes ring out nature's harmonies. Let us climb up the winding stairs of faith, and we, the children of the Musician, standing at His side, will see Him bend over to us, and will hear Him speak the sweet words of father love that are better, grander, and holier sounds than those which with rush and roar sweep through nature's vaulted temple, though the former are heard only by His children standing at His side. God of the universe, God of father, mother—our God—speak this hour to us through Thy Holy Spirit for the Christ's sake.

Sometimes as we contemplate the vastness of nature and the overwhelming power of Almighty God, the heart cries out, "Does He care for poor insignificant me? Am I not lost track of by Him in the vast surging tide and ceaseless flow of humanity?" So I inaudibly spoke in solitude amidst the shadows of a mighty forest, when a little violet, nestling under a sheltering rock, replied to me, and said to my soul: "The great

sun cares for me. I draw from it my life, my beauty, and my fragrance. There is but one sun to me, and it acts as if I am the only violet; for it fills and satisfies my whole nature. One supreme joy, however, is mine, that while not robbing me in the least, there is enough of my sun for all the other violets, and so it and I live, but not I, for it liveth in me."

Thus I discovered that the mission of the great sun in the physical world is but a partial expression of the mission of Jesus the Christ in the spiritual world. It redeems out of darkness and death and exalts to life and light.

"God of the granite and the rose,
Soul of the sparrow and the bee,
The mighty tide of being flows,
Through all Thy creatures, *out from Thee.*
It leaps to life in grass and flowers;
Through every grade of being runs,
Till from creation's radiant towers
Its glory streams in stars and suns.

"God of the granite and the rose,
Soul of the sparrow and the bee,
The mighty tide of being flows,
Through all Thy creatures, *back to Thee.*
Thus round and round the circle runs,
An endless sea without a shore,
Till men and angels, stars and suns,
Unite to praise Thee evermore."

So I find all nature spiritualized. As the sun in the midst of the great solar system, with all its infinite number of planetary and meteoric bodies charged with a natural trend toward "outer darkness," is gradually drawing and drawing them to itself, so the Sun of

Righteousness stands in the midst of life, with all His magnetic power gradually but surely drawing the naturally wayward sons of men to Himself. The two contending forces in the physical world are typical of the two mightier contending forces in the spiritual world.

The soul of man is too large for its earthly tabernacle of clay called the human body; hence, the latter falls into dissolution in the short space of threescore years and ten, while the immortal life within moves on in co-existence with the eternal Creator of all things.

The mind of man is too capacious of vision to be alone dependent upon the optic nerves for sight, and too fond of music and converse to be limited by the auricular channels to the mind. So we find the blind seeing and the deaf hearing through strange channels and along mysterious highways.

Man sees visions beyond the vista of physical sight.

He hears amidst the sacred silences of his soul's temple, while silent stars speak to him of God, and the rocks and flowers voice to him the messages of infinite power and love.

Man's inner nature hungers so keenly in the hours of his loftiest aspirations that physical appetite is forgotten while the soul craves sympathy and feeds upon love and hope.

He feels the touch of kindred spirits without calling into play nerves of sensation.

So divine-like is man in the midst of the sacred bowers of his own Eden home that he calls into existence immortal life, and the children of his love live on forever.

Such human life is awfully grand!

In length it is henceforth co-existent with God.

In height it reaches up to the foot of the eternal throne, while in depth who can sound it with the line of love or fathom it with the plummet of black despair?

Is not man's nature too exalted to be satisfied with sin?

Should not the soul of every rational being abhor sin?

The protest of truth against sin is like the protest of the Muses against malignant discords in Sacred Oratorios.

The protest of virtue against vice is like the protest of the spirit of music against the ruthless barbarism that would seize the harp strings while they are vibrating with the soul's most sacred emotions and would convert them into snares for rats, lizards, and serpents.

How can it be possible for God to arrange, classify, and determine the moral accountability of each individual in this mighty army of humanity which has passed, is passing, and will pass through the ages out of this world into eternity? So much of heredity, environment, physical and mental weakness having operated to warp and twist the moral natures, how can moral responsibility be fixed?

I have learned a great lesson from the sea, which explains how the greatest physical law in nature—gravitation—illustrates what may be the working of the wonderful law of final judgment.

Far out where the ocean is fathomless, like the sea of eternity, to human thinking, from all directions there flows in from time to time the débris of the world. All manner of materials, of varying shapes,

sizes, and weights, perchance pass together out and down into the deep, but each to its proper level by that law of gravitation which by divine decree passes unerring judgment on the specific gravity of all.

Is it more strange that the Creator of all should have and enforce a law of moral accountability that would give to the highest virtues the greatest rewards and to the deepest vices the deepest condemnation?

It seems to me that as I look through the open doors of the vegetable and animal worlds I behold this same awful moral conflict raging amidst the trees of the forest, the fruits of the orchard, and the flowers of the garden. At the same time the animal world, struggling in a pandemonium of horrors, appears to reveal the fact that all nature does verily groan and travail in pain until now.

There are two forces in nature—the Benevolent and the Malevolent.

A power in nature plants a tree for luscious fruitage; thereupon a force in nature sends the insects to suck its life, blight its flowers, and sting its fruit.

The desire of certain dogs to kill birds of heavenly plumage and angelic song originated not in the tender heart of God.

The disposition of the cat, when hunger is satisfied, to amuse itself with the dying agonies of a mouse, rending it limb from limb, is not of Him who watcheth the sparrow when it falls.

So pondering, I discover that while hateful treatment develops viciousness in the horse and dog, and while neglect destroys the orchard and vineyard, loving care brings the spirit of gentleness to the brute and

self-sacrificing labor produces the highest vintage. So love redeems all nature and becomes the shield against the forces that make for evil and death, and lifts to a higher and better life the recipients of its care.

A poorly clad, poverty-stricken, orphaned apprentice, day after day, on his way to work, watched the unequal struggle of certain wild flowers for existence against choking weeds and crowding brambles.

Learning to love them, through sympathy he lifted the plants, one by one, from their dreary places and replanted them in his little garden under the shelter of a great stone fence, which protected them from the blasts of the north wind, while they drank in the life-giving rays of the sun.

When the heavens withheld for a space their dews, he watered them from the nearby spring, while with tender hands he nourished their roots and guarded their beds.

Month by month and year by year love's nurture developed richer bloom and lovelier flowers, until the gardener, now an old man, standing in the midst of his floral bowers and leaning on his staff, said, "Lo, I have redeemed these wild flowers to their perfection by love and have crucified myself to the outside world all the days of my life that I might cause them to attain to and express in their lives the Master's true design, which He implanted in their natures. I wonder if I am not a Christ to these flowers, having given my life to them because of love that they might be redeemed to God's great plan?" And so he gave them back to God in all their beauty, for he believed not that heresy that any one of them

> "Is born to blush unseen
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air,"

for they were all in God's great garden, and He who created them and who is the lover of the lowly, and ever in his world, witnessed here a type of Gethsemane and Calvary in a little floral world which had been redeemed by vicarious love.

The little girl playing in the wild woods found the hidden little offspring of the wild cat. Taking the group of kittens to her home, she brooded over them with sweet childish love which they at times resented, but more often reciprocated. Later in life she, then a matron, loved and petted the descendants of her first charge, while in the evening-tide of her aged life, sitting in the old armchair, with the family pet of a much later generation mewing by the fireside, she thought, "I wonder if I too have not redeemed this generation by love, and have I not put back into that nature some of the spirit of God—see how this kitten loves me."

If we can charge inanimate nature with the forces of evil, how reasonable it is to believe that we can implant in animate nature the spirit of good!

Surely in the day of this world's final glory we shall witness the fulfillment of the prophet's vision in which the lambs rested with the ravenous beasts, then redeemed. The trees of the fields will then clap their hands amidst blossoming bowers, while parched deserts will burst forth in floral bloom, for all creation, animal, vegetable, and mineral, has groaned and travailed in pain for that hour of the New Birth.

Surely a New Earth will be the offspring of vicarious and redemptive love.

In that day the Master will see of the travail of His soul and will be satisfied.

The Creator of all things gave iron to man as one of his blessings. Iron is charged with God's love, and yet the assassin forges from it the stiletto. If righteousness and evil so contend in inanimate objects as well as in the highest order of creation, why may we not see the same fearful conflict everywhere, including, as a participant, the serpent in the Garden of Eden?

A few facts are demonstrated in this connection.

There is a power in the animal and vegetable world that makes for life.

There is a force in the animal and vegetable world that makes for death.

The conflict between them is incessant.

Love has redeeming and exalting power wherever applied.

All animate creation seeks eternal life—either through rootlet or seedlet.

While the vegetable and animal kingdoms, amenable to this universal law that makes for everlasting life, are satisfied through offspring, this is not so of the soul that is born of God.

That soul is a divine entity.

No inanimate matter has ever been annihilated. There is no such thing as annihilation in the universe of God.

Scientifically, disappearance never means destruc-

tion, and, logically, ignorance of our own destiny can never imply the destruction of the soul.

Truth is what we seek, and truth we must discover! The most inscrutable mystery in all creation is man's terrible responsibility to know the truth.

Nature knows no pardon for ignorance and no leniency for error. Ignorance of too high pressure in a steam boiler never saved an engineer from an explosion. Error in under-calculating the force of the wind never saved a sailor from death.

Our cemeteries, with many of our loved ones, sent there to untimely graves, are silent witnesses to the inaccuracy of human thought and errancy in human calculations.

In the moral realm the same fearful responsibility seems to attach itself to error in thought.

The sea of spiritual life on this planet is crowded with moral wrecks stranded or engulfed because of honestly intended but ignorant moral instruction at home, in the school, and in the church.

If ignorance is a doorway through which death stalks and seizes our children; if error in instruction does damn the morals of our sons and daughters, what may be the fate of our own immortal existence by the application of erroneous thought to that most sacred of all trusts committed to our thinking—

OUR SPIRITUAL DESTINY?

In the moral realm ignorance stands for danger, and error is synonymous with death!

Let us, then, with supreme fidelity to the cause of truth, and with minds appreciative of such a stupen-

dous responsibility, move further along the line of inquiry which is so tragically important to universal man.

The world concedes the presence of a supreme mind in this great universe, yet there are many who seem to think that it is irrational to believe that the human mind can be put in such accord with the divine mind that the latter can actually control and direct the former.

These very ones will admit that the desire and influence of such a supreme mind must be and are toward the highest and best good, and yet they deny the possibility of divine control over human minds. The teaching of our blessed Lord was that by the submission of the human will to the divine there would come into the life of man the overruling mind of God.

The objectors to this proposition have been present in audiences when some operator possessing great power of will and thought has, through *voluntary submission* of the will of his subject, caused the latter to think his thoughts and perform his deeds.

Why, then, does it seem to anyone incredible that the Supreme Mind of all the universe should influence the consenting mind, but lovingly permit it to exercise freedom of will should it desire to release itself even from the control of infinite love?

If we call upon Him who is invisible, can He answer by *active* interposition in human affairs?

One barrier—to many minds, an insurmountable one—seems to intervene. Can He set aside the "laws of nature" in response to the pleading of His children? Thought rules matter, untrammeled, irresistible; and

thought is moved and swayed by love. Of this we are daily witnesses.

Sitting in my library, with one of my children playing on the floor, I am suddenly startled by my child's piercing cry for protection, as a book case comes "toppling over."

Terrible situation! All the "inexorable laws" of materialistic nature are at work to make sure the destruction of that child before my very eyes.

The book case is falling in strict accord with the "laws of gravitation." I am held fast by "the force of inertia, which causes all matter at rest to remain at rest." Can I work a miracle and set aside nature's laws in answer to that child's cry to my father heart?

SOMETHING ACTS!

What is it? Matter? Ah, no! a force called *mind* acts on matter. It has no *fulcrum* and no *leverage*. It ignores all natural rules of attraction and repulsion. No law in matter applies to it, but by behest of *will* it causes a human arm of many pounds' weight to move. That immaterial, invisible, and indefinable something called mind sways matter in the human arm, *intercepts* the laws of gravitation, *nullifies* the power of inertia, all in answer to a child's *prayer* to a human father's heart.

Mind caused that motion—mind governed that motion, and the laws of nature became simply the obedient slaves to its will. Mind in the human body by its will-power controls the laws of its limited physical being, just as the same natural laws in wider cycles are governed and controlled by an infinite mind—even the

mind of God. Surely the servant is not greater than his Lord.

Man, however, turned his back on God at the dawn of human history, and then was witnessed the carnival of sin from which the human race has been struggling to find its way back.

When first amidst the wealth of primeval forests and floral beauty man appeared and became the abode of the first human thought, that being must have been sinless. A moment, a period of time, existed in that first life before the spirit of rebellion to moral law seized upon him. Perchance he poised on that sublime height for but a single moment, but in that poise

PURITY WAS REGNANT.

Then came "the fall." Some say that there was no "fall," but that there was an evolutionary rise. We accept that dictum. Thus by sin man was lifted from the Elysian fields of purity where he had reveled in the sweet smiles of his soul's approval. He was by sin exalted from the benignant atmosphere of heavenly perfection to the bleak mountain heights where the rough crags and rugged caverns of abutting and decoying sin have e'er since in delusive mockery maddened the soul. They have benumbed by their searing scars the delicate sensibilities of his original spiritual life.

That sweet angel, Heredity, whose blissful mission it is to gather up all the blessed fruit germs of each generation and strew them as seed in the harvest fields of oncoming multitudes, has found her plantings

mixed with the tares of a poisoned and polluted growth.

Thus conscience became almost mute; thought took on its selfish bias; superstition enveloped the race and the black horrors of antediluvian and subsequent ages swept in upon a world. From this moral débris man cried out wildly for help. The "soul of nature" had sent to man the cooling sea breezes, and he in turn worshiped

THE LEVIATHANS OF THE DEEP.

The "world's life" had given to man the beasts of the fields to bear his burdens and to satisfy his hunger. Appeasing the latter for the moment, the cravings of man's spiritual nature bent his knees in worship to the brutes. So while the intelligence, love, and tenderness of "a great predominating unity in nature" spoke to humanity through forests, flowers, and sparkling streams, a great cry of despair went up from the universal man who had been blinded and depraved by sin.

Out from amidst the smoke of human sacrifices the gurgling waters of the bloody Ganges and a thousand horrible forms of insane worship, a great weird and agonized chorus of misery flooded the heavens. God knew that the human race, cursed by its own sins, could find no story of redemption in nature, and was sinking into the bottomless abyss of certain death. A new voice to speak in nature became necessary. The occasion demanded a new voice of righteousness, heralding some plan of salvation. A new element had come into this world—the element of sin. If man had

not sinned, the revelation of God in nature would have been complete for him.

He who looks for God in nature will find in nature all the attributes of God as displayed for man before human sin entered this world.

Human sin was not in the world at the creation, only divine love for oncoming man, so the works of early creation—the rocks, fields, and forests—speak to us of all the divine attributes, excepting redemption from sin.

After physical creation sin entered the moral realm of this planet. Then its divine antidote of necessity appeared in the spiritual life of Jesus the Christ. Thus we have

A DUAL MESSAGE FROM GOD.

First: God in nature as he spoke to all man's needs before sin came into the human heart. Added to this we now have,

Second: God in Jesus Christ as he speaks to all the spiritual needs of sinful man.

Nature and Jesus the Christ are an old and a new testament, containing the complete romance of divine love in creation and in redemption.

The story of Christ had to be written that the world might know the matchless redemptive love of God, and so we venerate and love God's Holy Book, not as a fetich, but as a loving child folds to the heart the letter penned by the dying mother before passing into glory. Yea, more, for we catch from its pages the only message of eternal hope for our own hearts, the sweet words of redemption from sin, and salva-

tion to the immortal life. We exalt that Book as God's second best gift to man, for it tells a sweeter story than the winds speak or the rocks whisper. It is the story of the Messiah—that Messiah, God's gift of Himself for a lost world.

Most wondrously He grew. Too unique and holy was that life for our poor human thought to compass or fathom.

Methinks that as that infant heart enlarged beyond its first feeble responses to motherly affection, there steadily flowed into it a ceaseless stream of divine love. As capacity to will developed, there kept apace the infilling of the divine will. As thoughts multiplied, lo! there gradually showed forth in Him the mind of God.

Thus from infantile and dependent existence resting on the bosom of the blessed Virgin Mother, with all His physical limitations for receiving, but perfect in all his receptions, there steadily expanded a physical capacity for a larger portion of divine life. In never-failing proportions that divine life occupied to the full that expanding tenement of purest clay, until there stood forth before the world the Human and Divine Messiah in all his physical maturity. Thus "He grew in favor with God and man," always in perfect equipoise in His dual nature, but growing to the full stature of a complete physical life.

By this incarnation of divine life there was neither more of God on earth nor less of God in heaven, but "God manifest in the flesh."

The electric bulb is but the form which reveals the light from the electric current pervading the wire. It is the power of electricity made manifest in the bulb;

but when by age and use the bulb falls away the great current moves on in its silent course.

The lamp was but the medium for the revelation of the electric light, as the human form of Jesus the Christ showed forth the true light of the world. In this manner there came to the world a Redeemer—Christ our King. "Through His stripes we are healed."

VICARIOUS SUFFERING!—

a mystery which seems at first insolvable to mortal mind. Innocent love bruised and bleeding at the feet of sin that justice may be satisfied. A selfish soul, calloused to all the mystic influences of sadness and suffering about it, moves in cold and unfeeling courses amidst the despairing and struggling victims in life's moral wreckage. When the divine element of love and tenderness enters such a life, then that blessed but now sad angel—sympathy—causes the heart to yearn for others, the tear to start, and turns the customary hours of sleep into night vigils by the cot of human woe. He who possesses most of holy love in this world suffers most vicariously. It may not be in a Gethsemane, on the side of Olivet, or upon the cruel cross of Calvary, but, oh, how the spear thrust reaches the heart of innocent love! The tenderest hearts are susceptible to the keenest mental agonies. As we move upward in the scale of holy love, ascending step by step, from friend to brother, sister, father, mother, God, the sacrificial suffering of the soul by sorrow for the sins of others is graduated and intensified by the angle of ascent.

Love from its very nature becomes a mediator. He who in childish days with lisping, stammering penitence poured into his mother's ear the story of rebellion against fatherly authority, should recall how that penitence and that chosen mediator, in a mysterious way, known only to love, sweetened, intensified, and illumined the atmosphere of that hour of reconciliation.

But can the suffering of the innocent *atone* for the guilty? Can another one's heart blood, and that the blood of the innocent, *atone* for sin? There is here

A MYSTERY OF DIVINE ALCHEMY.

A little fellow deliberately threw a stone and smashed the window glass. The father upon his return home found the little culprit holding to his slightly older brother, who said, "Papa, Willie did it, but I had some pennies in my bank and I went over with Willie and I paid the lady for it. Please, papa, don't punish Willie." As the two little fellows stood, one shielding by love, the other seeking the protection of love, the innocent having suffered with and for the guilty—what think ye? Was it simply that after the act of sin the act of paying money made amends for the willful deed, or was it that a far higher result was obtained? Was not the love of each for the other intensified by that reciprocity of love, and was not that father greater, grander, nobler, and more faithful to the law of justice in forgiving rather than punishing? To our human thought, the penitence of the one and the vicarious sacrifice of the other made forgiveness

a moral necessity. And so the innocent suffers for the guilty. Vicarious suffering in a world of sin by its reflex influences on the other souls about it, makes the world a brighter, better, and holier place.

Widen this same circle now and take in the whole moral realm. We will find within it sin, atonement in Jesus Christ, and God. Read again the story of the little boys and then see how that from sin, atonement in Jesus Christ, and the forgiveness of God we experience "the joy of the redeemed."

We are now up in the realm of the highest thought. Is there darkness about us? Is there any mist of doubt or uncertainty obscuring our vision? Then let us watch with sincere heart-yearning for that sunrise! It's coming! May we stand together on the highest point of observation raised above the great ocean of time? That mountain top is an exalted life spanned by just thirty-three years and tracked by the earthly footprints of our Lord. Back of us is the rugged range of Old Testament history, while before us the foothills of the New Dispensation stretch away into the dim distance to a sea of universal love, which sweeps about the walls of

THAT CELESTIAL WHITE CITY,

whose domes and minarets are just beyond. The sun of prophecy has long since set. It went down first between the twin peaks of lofty Isaiah and rugged Jeremiah. The weird Ezekiel next becomes shrouded, until at last the sun of prophecy is veiled behind the minor prophets, disappearing in the sea of silence. For four

hundred years thereafter no ray of prophetic light found its way through the black and lowering clouds. With four long centuries of undisturbed night behind us, we cast an expectant glance to the eastern horizon. A setting sun throws its rays backward; a rising sun casts its rays forward. The last rays of prophecy were shed here on this mountain where we stand, while the first dawn of sunrise will be witnessed here. In our thinking we are at the corona of glory—our vision sweeps a world. Glorious opportunity! Precious hour this, fated with possibilities of wonderful outlook!

Is it strange to thee that the divine and human should here meet and coalesce in a God-child born of a woman? By the touch of Almighty God at the world's dawn of human life, inanimate nature was energized, vivified, and glorified, while from planetary dust there arose by the divine inbreathing of life, a race of poets, philosophers, and philanthropists—soulful beings endowed with God-like qualities of fatherhood, motherhood, the love of children, and all the sweet virtues of spiritual life.

Marvel of marvels that a little handful of clay, God-touched, should have become divinely formed and endowed with an immortal soul—yea, should have become a child of God!

Is it more of a miracle, then, that He who caused inanimate nature to conceive and bring forth immortal man, should unite with and enter into the life of that sweet and pure virgin of Bethlehem, revealing thereby the fatherhood of God and sanctifying the motherhood of earth?

It is indeed most natural that the supreme thing in the celestial world, the loving heart of a Heavenly Father, should be displayed to our sordid human race through the most supernal of all earth's possessions—motherhood—by immaculate conception. Eden is a greater mystery than Bethlehem.

While we are waiting here for the advancing light to burst in over Bethlehem's hills, let us, between the hours of the immaculate conception and the angel songs of eastern morn, look up into the calm vault of heaven.

The starry world hangs pendent over our heads. World upon world and constellation upon constellation swing in golden-belted highways, swayed by invisible power. No material arm is in sight, yet infinite arm power sweeps the sky. It's there. Somehow—yet there. Our soul's ear catches a voice inaudible and our heart stands almost still as a message comes in. The doors are locked and the windows bolted, and yet a messenger enters in and, standing before conscience, *speaks, speaks,* and conscience answers to it, yet no vibrations disturb the air and no waves of sound break the sacred silence of the soul's temple. While we are waiting keep thine eyes riveted upon the heavens above thee. The blanket of night is spread over the world at thy feet, and thou art throwing thy soul into the expanse above thee, where the invisible forces are evidencing the mightiest intelligence of the universe, as its worlds are swinging pendulums from golden suns held in place by invisible power. From whence? Invisible power and invisible persons are what we are dealing with this day.

ALL POWER IS INVISIBLE.

The flashing light in the wake of the flying meteor which you saw was not the power that launched it forth. The mallet struck the ball—you saw it. The mallet stopped, but the ball sped on. Secret, invisible power lurked within—unseen and invisible—but *there.* But above thee, where thou art looking with me now, no visible physical contact transmits, but power sweeps the abysses and climbs the heights unspoken and unseen, except as to thy soul. There it both speaks and is seen in the white-walled inclosure of thine inner consciousness, where no materialism finds its way and where thou and the Infinite meet.

During the Revolutionary War a spy passed through the British lines, bearing in his pocket a message to Washington. He was arrested, and the letter examined; but there being nothing seen in it but a commonplace letter to a friend, he was released and sped on. When Washington received from his hand the letter he held it up to the light, and there, traced with milk, was a communication of vital importance to the American armies. Will you hold up to the light " God's book of nature " and its sequel, " God's book of inspired revelation," and catch a message for your own heart as you discover the invisible power and the invisible persons lurking therein?

Until recently I thought there were but three persons crucified together that awful night on Calvary: Christ in the center, and a thief on the right and a thief on the left. By putting the Gospel accounts to-

gether, with a study of Paul's epistle, I find that we cannot harmonize the accounts of the Crucifixion, unless we admit that there were *four* crucified together. Christ's cross bore not only himself, but *another.* I follow the narrative, and find that Joseph of Arimathæa's tomb contained Christ and *a companion* from His cross, while on the golden morning of the Resurrection, when the flashing angelic swords cleft the seal and cut the bands, Christ and *a companion* came forth together to that Resurrection. Noting the phraseology, I sweep back in eager thought to the scene of Christ's baptism, and there too the Word admits of another being baptized with *Him.* Let us, with the most solemn thought toward God, press the inquiry, Who was that other one?

BELIEVER, THOU ART THE ONE!

"With Christ in baptism" (Col. ii. 12); "Crucified with Christ" (Gal. ii. 20.); "Dead with Christ" (Col. ii. 20); "Risen with Him" (Col. ii. 12); "Companions with Him forevermore" (Matt. xxviii. 20).

Believer, how do you honor or dishonor that companionship? Oh, servant of God, dost thou only dream of this, or hast thou gotten the thought of divine companionship woven into the very warp and woof of thy nature, so that thou art weaving the design of thy life like unto the life of Jesus the Christ of God?

While we have been waiting and talking together the light has burst over Judah's hills.

"There's a mother's deep prayer,
And a baby's low cry!

And the Star rains its fire while the beautiful sing,
For the Manger of Bethlehem cradles a King."

The angelic chorus has startled the morning stillness; the wise men have bowed at the manger's side, and the temple has received the youth. His fame has gone out through all the land. Sickness has fled before Him, while death itself has for the first time felt the irresistible power of a revealed Christ who came to lift the weight of human sorrows.

Enthusiastic crowds meanwhile pressed Him on all sides, until, transformed into a raging mob, they showed Him to us crucified, dead, buried. Then came the dashing charge of the angels to the sepulcher, the very flash of whose glances paralyzed the Roman guards. Then followed the reassertion of life. We now in this panorama behold the glory-crowned Mount of Ascension, and "He is received out of their sight."

A forsaken world visited and a visited world forsaken! Is that your creed? If so, stand with us as the advancing day permits us to discern the succeeding acts of the Apostles, in which the Invisible is brought to our sight with such strange power and overwhelming influence.

The revelation opens up with the statement that what has passed in such rapidity before our vision between Bethlehem and the Ascension was but the *beginning* of Christ's work. From Bethlehem to the Ascension marked but the beginning of Christ's marvelous redemptive work.

Listen to the record (Acts i. 1): Luke says "The former treatise have I written unto you, O Theophilus,

of all that Jesus *began* both to do and to teach." The gospels are but the history of the inauguration of Christ's work and words. "Began both to do and to teach." Either He has abandoned His work, or He is yet doing it. "Lo, I am with you all the days" was the statement. How can that harmonize with His actual absence? Ah! Note ye: "*a cloud* received Him out of their sight." He became invisible! As He appeared "in the upper room" and was invisible between the door and the middle of the room, so He vanished from their sight, but remained our ever-present Lord. No more physical, earthly presence to divide or limit the soul thought. Mary, the sister of the entombed Lazarus, said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, our brother had not died." Was not our Lord there? Being physically out in the desert, He was not thought of as being in Bethany. He was hedged in to the thought of His most loving followers, the

WOMEN OF BETHANY,

because of His physical environment. Freed from those earthly conceptions and His embodiment, He is lifted up in our thought to the eternal throne of God and becomes to us our always-present Lord and Saviour.

It was a strange message that Christ delivered to His disciples just before He left, and which, while one of the most sublime and important of all His utterances, is one of the least comprehended by the Church. He stated the necessity of His becoming invisible that He might give unto His followers the ministration of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine laid down is that compan-

ionship with Christ is not enough. Note carefully the petitions of His disciples and their reliance all centered in the visible Christ. No prayer is recorded before the Ascension in which the disciples prayed to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. Yet Christ prayed continually. Therefore it became a necessity that He should go into the invisible realm so that the Holy Spirit should reveal unto them the Fatherhood of God, the Omnipresent Christ, and the universal ministrations of the Holy Ghost.

Bethlehem was a necessity to reach the world. *Calvary* was a necessity to redeem the world. *Pentecost* was a necessity to sanctify the world.

When our Lord had departed, there were two things that His disciples knew that they must do:

First: Model their lives after His.

Second: Witness for Him.

But our Blessed Master had practically said: "I am going away, and will leave you unfitted to witness for me. You know all about my miraculous coming. You know all about my ministry. You were with me in Gethsemane and at Calvary. You stood by at the Resurrection. You companioned with me during many days of happy reunion after death, and thou art to see me caught up into the invisible realm beyond thee, while heavenly heralds are to bid thee speed on. I know your hearts are eager to tell the story, while Calvary stands as a monument to the intensity of my desire to win a lost world. But," He said, "wait, wait, wait!"

Those disciples had *knowledge, experience,* and *willing hearts.* "Not enough," says our Lord, "to carry

the priceless message to a lost world." Not enough! There is a force, a power, a *personality* that must come into thy life before thou art prepared. Thus does Christ magnify the Holy Spirit, invisible to our sight, but present at our side, waiting to take possession of our hearts.

While wise men bow at Bethlehem let wise men also bow at Pentecost. While the frankincense and myrrh sweeten the air in that City of David, the birthplace of the Messiah, let the offerings of love and adoration be likewise poured out at Pentecost, the birthplace of the Holy Ghost. Oh, thou blessed Comforter, be Thou our Guide forevermore!

Oh, brethren, do you know Christ? So did the *unprepared* disciples. Have you experience in walking in His footsteps? So had the *unprepared* disciples. Have you a willing heart for testimony? So had the *unprepared* disciples. Do you say, "What lack I yet?" Do you not lack what the Church of Christ so greatly needs to-day—a special baptism of the Holy Spirit? Are you being guided in all your thoughts and speech by the Holy Spirit, or are you like the professed disciples just before Pentecost (casting lots for a successor to Judas), having your course steered by chance or uncertain events? I call your close and prayerful attention to the Apostles as we watch them from our vantage-point of observation. The command of our Lord to His disciples to wait until the Holy Spirit should be given to them was met by their gathering together and spending ten days in prayer for such a baptism and a personal revelation of a personal comforter. Think of it for a moment. That com-

mand meant, Do not take a step; do not speak a word; do not undertake in any way to make a move to carry into effect the great commission unless under the personal influence of the Holy Spirit. Now let us watch the effect, as with

MIGHTY, MAJESTIC STEP

the Holy Spirit, receiving the intense petitions of the disciples, crowns Pentecost with His sublime presence. Oh, what tremendous obligations crowd in upon us to *God the Father,* who from the wealth of His infinite love sent His Son into the world. Oh, what tremendous obligations crowd in upon us to *God the Son,* who gave Himself a sacrifice for a lost world! Oh, what tremendous obligations crowd in upon us to *God the Holy Spirit*—He who brooded over the world at the Creation; He who gave the torch of light to the Old Testament prophets, enabling them to foreshadow the Messiah to come! It was the Holy Spirit who brought the man Christ into being, descended upon Him in the form of a dove at baptism, and was with Him in the desert. It was of the Holy Spirit that our blessed Lord loved to talk in His last conversations with His disciples before the Crucifixion. It was the Holy Spirit of whom He made that glorious prophecy that portends so much to you and me—that He should descend upon His disciples in all time and fill them with Himself. Then follows that resplendent galaxy of flashing promises that reveals to us the blessed mission of the Holy Spirit who was to descend as "that other Comforter."

He shall lead the disciples into all truth.

Do you want to be guided and led into a full knowledge of the divine love? Do you want to know your Saviour as you have never known Him before? Do you want His Word to blaze forth with new light and ring with sweeter words of comfort and joy? Then pray for the Holy Spirit, and cease not that prayer until the answer comes.

He shall be the guide and companion of the Church.

Dost thou want that Holy Spirit to companion with thy soul? to lead thee into labors of love, lighten thy days with His sweet converse, and keep thee close to the Father-heart of God? Then pray for the Holy Spirit, and cease not that prayer until the answer comes.

He shall make us like unto Christ.

Do you want the same mind in you that was in Christ Jesus our Lord? Do you want fitness for service? Do you want to have power from on high? Then pray for the Holy Spirit, and cease not that prayer until the answer comes.

Then to that Holy Spirit, to whom we owe our salvation, our knowledge of Christ, our promptings to a better life, and from whom we receive the blessed guidance and help of His daily companionship, be glory and honor for ever and ever!

Shall we open up our hearts now—even now—to the reception of the Holy Spirit? "Be ye filled with the Holy Ghost." Oh, that we workers could be brought by the Blessed Spirit close to the heart of the Man of Sorrows! Then we would easily find our way to the heart of sorrowing humanity. The secret of the early Church was that it was

First: Full of Faith.

Second: Full of the Holy Ghost.

How did the Holy Spirit descend upon the early disciples?

First: As a sound of rushing wind (but there was no wind). Manifest power!

Second: Cloven, fiery tongues. Witness power—power to witness.

"Ye are my witnesses." But note the statement, "After the Holy Ghost is come upon you, ye shall be witnesses unto me." After—after—"after the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Dare you teach a Sunday-school class without being filled with the Holy Ghost? Dare you live? Dare you live without the intense assurance that He is abiding in thy soul? How sweet the atmosphere of thy secret life will be with such a guest! The Holy Spirit is always spoken of in God's Book in terms of gentleness, love, and tenderness. We read of the wrath of God the Father, the wrath of God the Son, the judgment and the tribunals of the Father and the Son; but the Holy Spirit is always spoken of as tenderness and love.

Oh, that He might enter into full possession of our souls, to guide our ambition, illuminate our thought, and, taking complete possession of our minds, make our lives conform to His whole nature!

Now lift thy thought to the very throne of God!

Jesus was a man. Within Him was God, and He became the Christ of a world.

You are a man. The promise is that within you God the Holy Ghost may dwell, and then thou wilt become a Christ in thine influence. "As thou hast

sent me into the world, even so, even so, send I them into the world." Marvelous possibilities, stupendous privileges. Shall we not seek above all other things to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and so companion with Him for the Christ's sake? Amen.

"I would not have you ignorant, brethren, of them who are asleep."

OUR VANISHED LOVED ONES.

"I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, amen; and have the keys of death and of the realm of the departed spirits."—*Rev.* i. 18.

ONCE in boyhood days, when fever laid its hand upon me, I tossed with blinded eyes and delirious brain, fearing every imaginable evil, when out of the blackness about me I heard a voice that dispelled all the discordant cries which were rending my disordered brain. I felt a throbbing which I knew meant that I, a little boy, was held and kept on mother's bosom and was being spoken to by mother's love. An ineffable light illumined my soul, and I was at rest.

Later on I followed her down to where two worlds met, and kneeling at that bedside I saw the marvelous radiance from a redeemed spirit already plumed for its heavenly flight. Then I saw her pass beyond the range of my natural vision, but she did not hurry. She for some little time rested there in the Valley of Shadows and sweetly talked with me. She told me that she knew the shadows were there, but they were only there to us who remained behind. "All is light to me," she added, "all is light; Jesus is here." I was behind her, as it were. The golden light of the Celestial One she saw beyond her, left for me the shadow of my earthly loss. Her vision was clear. Two worlds for her were billowed in light. As I brushed away the blinding tears, behold, I saw no more, for

SHE HAD BECOME INVISIBLE.

Somehow my mind has not been satisfied with the statement that we are separated. Only one change has come over me—I cannot see her with these now failing natural eyes; that is all. I never did see her, anyway. I daily saw her face, which carried an outward expression of a wonderful spiritual life within, but I never saw that life. I had heard her expressions of love for her boy, and had felt its manifestations, but I never saw that divine flame. So when her voice failed and her face took on its last beatific expressions, love lived on with me, and I know that love lived on with her; the reflecting medium had simply given out, or had it been changed for another? Were those loves separated? Would God separate them?

I have been ever since watching the opening into that mystic realm called death. Other of my dear ones have meanwhile vanished therein, and there has gradually come to me a new and strange impression, a deep calm and a blessed companioning, until the longing of my soul is now not to go, but only to see, for seeing is going and going is seeing—one is but a synonym of the other. The term "departed spirit" is a misnomer, if I read aright the Word of God. In wandering along the portals constantly swinging open into that realm, I came to an old passageway. It was where Jacob went through, and the statement is made on indisputable authority that he was "gathered to his people." A strange expression prevalent among nomadic tribes, the memory of whose sepulchered dead

haloed their resting-places along the line of wandering, as in *solitary* graves they kept death's vigils.

How blessed to our thought that this wondrous Book of God opens so early with the statement that in passing over we go to our loved ones! Yea, even before Jacob's invisibility God had hung out a light over the entry into the eternal world by telling Abraham in a wondrous revelation that when he should be called hence he would go to his fathers who had gone before. And so there comes that assurance of reunion with our loved ones, as old as the Word of God itself. This answers to the heart-yearning so strong in all of God's children. It responds to our desire for the unity of loves in the realms of light.

Somehow with anxious forebodings we ponder the thought, "Will our loved ones who have entered into the larger life be to us, when we join them, what they were to us when we companioned together with them in this lesser life?" What means that strange utterance of the inspired writer, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we shall be changed"? Will earthly ties vanish? Does the statement that there "They neither marry nor are given in marriage" sound the death knell to that bond, sanctified by love's joys and sorrows? Can it be that the sweetest ties born of life's companionships are "changed" or destroyed as we pass through that strange ordeal so mistakenly called death?

Let us bear in mind that the better life is a spiritual existence. The physical, sensual, and materialistic natures that we now have will there be transformed into glorified bodies which will thrill only with the highest

and holiest spiritual emotions. Sensual joys will be forever succeeded by spiritual delights.

We all appreciate the fact that there are blood relationships here, where no "kinship of spirit" exists. On the contrary, we ofttimes witness in this world evidences of a spiritual brotherhood where there beats but the physical pulsations of a common humanity.

When our Divine Master said, "He that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven, the same is my mother, my sister, and my brother," He let us somewhat into the secret of the relationships which shall exist when we shall be "at home with the Lord."

Let us gather up in thought all that there is in the heart of motherhood, in sisterly love and brotherly affection, and blending it together as we conceive it exists in our Heavenly Father's home, we will have but a faint conception of the love ties, or spiritual relationships, between the redeemed spirit and our blessed Lord. If, then, all who enter into that larger life are to experience such a marvelous enrichment of the soul's affections, will not the element of character which we so adore in our loved ones here be infinitely beautified, to the intensifying of our affections toward them there?

Will not our own infilling from the Divine Nature make its irresistible appeal to the hearts of those who with a new heavenly vision will see our likeness to Jesus Christ?

When our loved ones shall sit with us at the feet of Jesus in the celestial realm, with all human frailties gone and all hearts filled to overflowing with the holiest emotions, will not love flow at high tide?

But are they far hence? The babe lifted by angelic beings from its mother's bosom, but also from a world's terrible moral hazards—

IS IT FAR OFF?

The loved wife on whom someone leaned in that sweetest of life's joys—wifely love—is she far hence? It is not a day's journey! This is certain, for He who lifted the penitent one from the cruel cross to celestial joys said to him, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," and so within the compass of but a few hours our thought should look with that confident hope that we shall find within it our spiritual ones, and in the finding shall have new joys by companioning with them in the Divine Presence.

One joyful thought entering into this inquiry is that time and distance are unknown and non-existent in the other life. A thousand years to them are "but as yesterday." Not as to-day with its wearisome cares, but as yesterday with its vague recollections, or as a single "watch in the night." The whole period of human existence on this planet is less than the dim memories of an earthly day's span to the glorified spirits amidst the beatific joys of eternity. "No more time!" Wherever our loved ones are, the assurance comes to us that in point of time they cannot be far away, for time is eliminated from the heavenly life. For our hungry hearts, wearied with the lonely vigils here, this truth, while comforting, does not entirely fill the void that seems to exist between us and our invisible ones. It might not take them long to come to us, but do they come and are they very near?

Oh, for an answer whereby our turbulent thoughts might safely rest in conscious companionship with them here, as we shall some day in more clearness of vision companion with them there!

One thing is sure: the angels are constantly ministering to all His loved ones in this world of ours. "Are they not *all* ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto them who are heirs of salvation?" All down through the ages, kings, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, with the blessed Christ, have borne testimony to these sweet messengers of comfort. There can be no mistake but that there is a clear revelation contained in the Word of God that most of heaven is here with us. God's universality is left nowhere in doubt. Our blessed Lord said, "Lo, I am with you always," and the Holy Spirit's constant abiding among us and in us is clearly affirmed with such supreme delight to the heart of every true child of God. How the soul should fill with joy over the divine goodness in revealing the fact that *all* the angels are sent forth to minister to Christ's followers in this earthly conflict! There can be no question, then, that all the celestial powers, from the Most High God to the humblest angel of light,

ARE ACTIVELY ENLISTED

in a world's redemption, and are with us in the conflict. Why should we, then, for a single moment suppose that our own loved ones are the only exiles from this most sweet and joyous service to Him who gave Himself for us? With our present conceptions of God such would not seem possible. Let us, however, move

along the line of the Christ revelation, and new gleams of light will flash in upon us with heavenly radiance.

Jesus the Christ taught His disciples by special revelations when He desired them to know more fully some deep truth.

When in the darkness of the prison's gloom John the Baptist felt the black shadow of doubt in his soul, he sent to Jesus and asked Him if He was really the One that was to come, or must he look for another. Jesus replied by simply letting John's disciples *look* into His miraculous work.

When the disciples needed to be taught of His great love for the sinner, He let them *witness* the climax to the scene at Samaria's well.

As the lesson of humility was needed, they *beheld,* and lo! He washed their feet.

So as He desired to let them and us further into the secret of the eternal world, He took Peter, James, and John with Him into the mountain for a soul *vision.*

It was no new thing for Him to go into the mountain apart. All day He walked and talked with those of this world, and then as "every man went unto his own house Jesus went into the Mount of Olives" or elsewhere and companioned with the Invisible. The record is very plain that spiritual communings were His sometimes for a whole night. So He took the three disciples up into the mountain with Him, and they fell asleep. When they awoke He permitted them to *see* who were with Him, and there in calm, sweet, heavenly converse sat Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. They were talking about earthly events that were to occur in the life work of our Lord. Just as angels had been

found to be with Him elsewhere, so here in the divine counsels, and seen by special permission, were these earthly redeemed ones. Conversant they seemed to be with the affairs of the earthly kingdom. Strange, was it not, that the disciples being permitted to use their spiritual vision knew who Christ's two companions were? Simply by a change in their power of sight they also beheld a new Christ, for He was transfigured before them. Ah, could we but see with that peculiar sight from which our eyes are now holden, whom might we not see? The disciples

SIMPLY HAD A FOREGLEAM

of that hour when they should know even as they were then known. These heavenly ones were present with the disciples while they stupidly slept, and were apparent only to them when God for a moment opened their vision a little wider. It should be remembered that there were three witnesses who beheld this glorious scene.

One fact is clear: Wherever Jesus is, there are our saved, vanished, and loved ones. When we depart we shall be with Christ, which is far better (Phil. i. 23), so that when we are absent from the body we are present with the Lord (2 Cor. v. 8).

Another fact is clear: If we are His disciples, then wherever we are, there Jesus is.

Our blessed Lord on the Mount companioned on His earthly side with Peter, James, and John, and on His heavenly side was companioning with Moses and Elijah; so that side by side in the holy company of our Lord these of heaven and earth sat together—to the

disciples for a time unconsciously, but they were there together, nevertheless.

With this wonderful picture before us, we have an illustration given to us by our loving Master that the redeemed in heaven and the redeemed on earth *companion* together in that most blessed of all associations —*Unity in Christ.* If that unity is perfect, no space can divide and no time can separate us from each other. Oh, how we should seek to keep in that most holy bond! Separation from our loved, invisible ones can only occur when they or we are exiled from Christ. If so near, may we not speak to these dear ones, and why can we not receive just one message from them? Why should we desire to commune one with the other? Perfect faith in the word of God should satisfy this craving of our souls.

Fellow-disciples, is it possible that we so doubt our Lord's statement that in order to believe Him we must, Thomas-like, see with the mortal eye and hear with the fleshly ear? Lo! He speaketh to the heart of man, and only to the eye of faith does the celestial vista now open to the soul of man ere he is permitted to wing his flight through realms of eternal joy. Somehow I feel that

MESSAGES ARE PASSING

constantly from one to the other, but there is failure here to understand the heavenly voices, coming as they do in the language of heaven. Our limited knowledge of the spiritual world narrows the possibilities down, and yet some few things we do know. In this world

of ours words are but the evidences of mental action. It is the thought we are after. So as we ponder the problem, it seems very clear that God through His infinite love gives us the key to the soul desires for us of our invisible loved ones and transmits to us the revelation of their heart-throbs in our behalf.

Son, is thy mother with Christ in the better realm? You know then, under the divine light of God's Word, what her message to your soul is. Could it be other than Christ's invitation to you?

Husband, has the wife of thy love passed into that realm so near, so beautiful, and so holy? Listen to the voice speaking in thy soul. Does it not interpret her message. Yes?

Oh, mother, wife, daughter, sister, thy loved one is with Jesus, and Christ is either in your heart or at the door of your heart, and your loved one is there with Him. Stop and listen! Away back in the secret chamber of your soul His voice speaks. Listen! Would your loved one send any other message than that? In the awful extremity of a world's need, all heaven can have but one message for each of us, while the world can have but one answer which it could feel was fitted to it.

Heaven's united message is, Follow Jesus. The answering message should be the gift of self to God. Then that bond of blessed companionship is completed, and we in our very deepest natures will enjoy that most holy relation, simply waiting for that bright and golden moment when the veil shall be riven, the vision expanded, the weary body divested, and we move, not out to, but into that realm where we shall be gathered

to our people. Happy moment—oh, longed-for hour! Feeling the sweetness of their blessed presence with us now, but then seeing the celestial light of their spirits divine. Now knowing something, but so weakly, of the divine companionship, but then knowing as we are known.

A VISION BY THE SEA.

I PITCHED my tent one summer night on a point of land extending far out into the sea. As darkness settled down upon me the storm-clouds that had been gathering all that day came rolling in upon the land. The wild winds swept sea, hill, and vale, while great angry waves dashed themselves in fury on the shore.

IT WAS AN APPALLING STORM!

As I peered out of my tent into the blackness of the night I saw a great lighthouse lifting its golden beacon far into the clouds. All night long the storm raged. All night long that flaming signal was exalted far into the clouds!

But soon the morning dawned. That wild, tumultuous sea had now become an imperial highway of royal purple, flecked by golden flashlights sparkling in the pathway of the sun. Flocks fed in the valleys and along peaceful streams, while the flowers of the fields lifted their heads, still glistening with the tear-drops of the night, that they might be kissed by the lips of the rising sun.

A great fleet of vessels was moored under the shelter of yonder reef, having found its way into port by following the light through the stream. Their anchors were cast, their sails were furled, the waves had ceased from troubling and the sailors were at rest.

No need of the lighthouse now, for the sun had become the light thereof, and the waves had ceased their troubling and the sailors were at rest!

Oh, Beulah Land, sweet Beulah Land! Oh, Paradise, sweet Paradise! Oh, Golden City, sweet Golden City! May we hold aloft the glorious light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ above the raging seas of time; that the storm-tossed mariners may find their way by its rays into the port of peace, where "the Lamb is the light thereof" and "the wicked shall cease from troubling and the weary shall be at rest!"

Oh, Golden Day! Speed thou thy glorious coming!

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